



U.S. Department of Justice
United States Attorney
Western District of New York

Further inquiries: (716)843-5814

138 Delaware Avenue
Buffalo, New York 14202

PRESS RELEASE

September 21, 2004

RE: UNITED STATES v. CARMALLA ARRINGTON

United States Attorney Michael A. Battle announced today that a federal grand jury returned an Indictment against Carmalla Arrington, age 48, of Buffalo, NY. The eight-count Indictment charges Carmalla Arrington with sending multiple hoax threat letters via the United States Postal Service regarding a plot involving an Arab-American to bomb the May 22, 2004 Daemen College graduation ceremony at Kleinhans Music Hall, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 844(e). Each count carries a maximum penalty of 10 years imprisonment, a fine of \$250,000.00, or both. It should be noted that the fact that a defendant has been charged with a crime . . . is merely an accusation and the defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty. **(Disciplinary Rule 7-107(B)(6))**.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Timothy C. Lynch, an attorney in the Office's Anti-Terrorism Unit, stated that counts one through three of the Indictment charge Ms. Arrington with mailing three hoax threat letters to three Daemen College employees. The letters, postmarked March 1, 2004, read as follows:

This is to alert you that [an individual whose identity is known to the Grand Jury] and three other people have been planning to set up explosive [sic] devices for graduation May 2004[.]

THIS IS NOT A JOKE!!!!!!!!!!!! PLEASE CONDUCT A CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK, WHICH WILL REVEAL [sic] A HISTORY OF ARREST INVOLVING [sic] TERRORISM AND INTERMEDIATE FAMILY MEMBERS [sic].

Please for the safety of other students!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

The Indictment also alleges in counts four through eight that Ms. Arrington mailed a different hoax threat letter to the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Buffalo Police Department, the Erie County Sheriff's Department, Kleinhans Music Hall, and WIVB-TV, Channel 4. This letter, dated May 18, 2004, read as follows:

MAY 18, 2004

PLEASE HELP!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

[An individual whose identity is known to the Grand Jury] (NURSING STUDENT AT DAEMEN COLLEGE) ALONG WITH 2 OTHER PEOPLE IS PLANNING TO SET OFF EXPLOSIVE [sic] AT KLEINHANS MUSIC HALL GRADUATION MAY 22 2004 HIS ENTIRE FAMILY IS LINKED TO TERRORISE [sic] ACTIVITY AND ARE ASSOCIATED WITH THE LACKAWANA [sic] 6!!

PLEASE HELP PROVIDE SAFETY TO THE OTHER STUDENT.

THIS IS NOT A JOKE , [sic] THIS MAN IS
DANGEROUS!!!!!!!!!!

PLEASE DO A CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK.

Mr. Lynch said that upon receiving the threat letter, FBI agents were able to quickly determine that the Arab-American named in the letter was not involved in any bomb plot. Further investigation conducted by the FBI Joint Terrorism Task Force thereafter identified Ms. Arrington as the individual who sent both sets of hoax threat letters.

United States Attorney Battle stated that this Indictment demonstrates that the Government will continue to vigorously investigate and prosecute those who send false threatening communications via the mail or any other medium of commerce. Mr. Battle also observed that while FBI agents were pursuing leads in this case, which proved in the end to be a hoax, the agents' time was diverted from pursuing other, more serious terrorism-related matters, which itself poses a danger to the community.

The eight count Indictment was the culmination of an investigation on the part of the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Joint Terrorism Task Force, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Peter Ahern, as well as the Town of Amherst Police Department.

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